

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

*

GROUNDING OF TOWING VESSEL *

Accident No.: DCA22FM035

CC PORTLAND ON AUGUST 8, 2022 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: TIMOTHY VINCENT, Master

CC *La Quinta*

Aboard the *CC La Quinta*

Friday,
August 12, 2022

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF
INTERVIEW FOR

Capt. Timothy Vincent, Master, CC La Quinta

TAKEN ON

August 12, 2022

| PAGE NUMBER | LINE NUMBE R | CURRENT WORDING | CORRECTED WORDING |
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If, to the best of your knowledge, no corrections are needed kindly circle the statement "no corrections needed" and initial in the space provided.

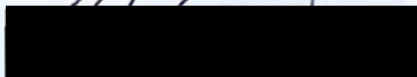
NO CORRECTIONS NEED.

Initials



Timothy Vincent

Printed Name of Person providing the above information



Signature of Person providing the above information

10-17-22

APPEARANCES:

LCDR [REDACTED], SIO
United States Coast Guard

R. JON FURUKAWA, IIO
National Transportation Safety Board

CWO [REDACTED], IO
United States Coast Guard

RICHARD GORDON, Marine Coordinator
Cheniere Corpus Christi LNB Facility

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:31 p.m. Central)

1
2
3 [REDACTED] Good afternoon. This is Lieutenant Commander
4 [REDACTED] on Friday, August 12th at 12:21 Central Time. I'm
5 located on the *CC La Quinta*. I have with me Captain Timothy
6 Vincent, right. This is in relation to the *CC Portland* grounding
7 incident. We're onboard just taking a look at the wheelhouse,
8 similar configuration to the *Portland* sister ship and some
9 questions regarding Mr. Timothy Thorsen's training.

10 Do I have your permission to record this interview?

11 MR. VINCENT: Yes.

12 [REDACTED] And can you please state your name for the
13 record?

14 MR. VINCENT: Timothy Ray Vincent.

15 [REDACTED] And we also have present -- my name is
16 Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] with the U.S. Coast Guard.

17 MR. FURUKAWA: Jon Furukawa, NTSB.

18 [REDACTED]: Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED], Coast
19 Guard.

20 MR. GORDON: Richard Gordon, Marine Coordinator Cheniere.

INTERVIEW OF TIMOTHY VINCENT

21
22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q. Okay. Awesome. All right. So I'll bring up the training
24 log that was provided to us by Mr. Thorsen. And we noted, your
25 initials were present on a few of the elements. I'm going to go

1 through each one that I see your initials for. And I'm going to
2 have you saying whether or not those are your initials or not,
3 okay. So we have the first one is going to be on section three
4 evolution number one dated April 29th onboard the *Gregory* for the
5 (indiscernible) with the *Adriano Knutsen*. And these are your
6 initials on the left.

7 A. (Indiscernible).

8 Q. Okay. And then the second one is going to be -- we have on
9 evolution number two, element number two April 27th, *Gregory*,
10 *Adriano Knutsen*, are those your initials?

11 A. No, ma'am.

12 Q. Okay. And we have on, under the same element -- I'm sorry, I
13 lost my page. Here we go. Element two, May 1st onboard the
14 *Gregory* with the *La Mancha Knutsen*, are those your initials?

15 A. No.

16 Q. We have onboard the same element May 2nd onboard the *Gregory*,
17 *Stena Crystal* sleigh (ph.) assist. Are those your initials?

18 A. No, ma'am.

19 Q. Okay. We have -- let's see if I have anymore T.V. initials.
20 All right. Those are all the initials that we have on his
21 training program for you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) verify from Thorsen
23 that those are Tim's, or this is just some miscommunication?

24 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible) this the record -- the last
25 time I --

1 [REDACTED] Okay. Great.

2 MR. FURUKAWA: Yeah, I guess -- kind of did it just so he can
3 remember who he had to go by and get a (indiscernible).

4 [REDACTED] Yeah, but he said for some of them, you could
5 see in pencil where he would put it, not under that section
6 specifically, so that he would remember to ask for them. But
7 there were some that I noticed inconsistent with the same
8 initials. And I asked him about those. And he said that he did
9 write those down so as like a memory jogger. That's what he --

10 MR. VINCENT: Now, I know he did take a lot of notes when he
11 rode with me. But there's no way on God's green earth I would've
12 signed anything for him --

13 BY [REDACTED]

14 Q. Well, how do you feel about his ability as a master onboard
15 one of these towing vessels?

16 A. Just from the way that I worked with him, he needed a lot of
17 training. Now, I'm not going to sit here and say, hey, no, I
18 don't think he'd been a good master, because that's not fair to
19 him because when you're training, you're learning how to drive
20 these boats. It took me a while to learn them. And I'm not going
21 to do that. But he needed some training as far as, you know, like
22 even docking the boat, he still didn't quite understand how to
23 dock the boat alongside a ship. He knows how to do it. He just
24 don't understand how to do it --

25 Q. All right. So what's your background? How long have you

1 been working for Edison Chouest tugs?

2 A. Fifteen years.

3 Q. Fifteen years. And what were your positions in that 15
4 years?

5 A. So I started out as a OS, then I was a AD. Let's see, after
6 that I became a cook for a little while. Then I got my hundred-
7 ton, 200-ton license, went to work on the crew boats for a little
8 bit. And then, (indiscernible) the tugs in Sabine as an
9 unlicensed engineer, so I worked over there for five years my
10 first (indiscernible). I licensed up and got my 1600-ton mate and
11 my 500-ton master, my master tow while I was there, left, went to
12 the Karen (ph.) Swess (ph.) as a DDO operator and a mate.
13 (Indiscernible) I come back to the tugs in Sabine for I think a
14 year, a year and a half, trained as a deckhand. And then, I got
15 my captain's spot. And then from there, I went to Alaska. I
16 worked on the *Alaska* for a year and a half, left Alaska, stayed in
17 Tampa, did (indiscernible).

18 Q. So how long have you been a master on these tractor tugs --

19 A. On these --

20 Q. Yeah --

21 A. On these tugs, about four years.

22 Q. Four years.

23 A. This is a (indiscernible) on *Alaska*.

24 Q. Yes. Okay. We did see that on their website. All right.

25 So did you go through the same training program with the signoffs

1 like I just showed you for Tim?

2 A. Yeah, back then, that was back when I was on the Sabine
3 boats. And then, when I transitioned to these, I did a similar
4 signoff just to make sure I could drive these. It was a similar
5 one, (indiscernible). I mean, it's just the same concept. It's
6 just instead of -- driving for a Sabine, you drove from the stern,
7 these drive from the bow position -- flip flops (indiscernible).

8 Q. Okay. Was there any formal training that the company had you
9 go through to operate Z-drives?

10 A. (Indiscernible) I did a tug simulator and then just -- you
11 know, a deckhand and a mate, you know, just years of practice.

12 Q. What was the simulator? Where was that?

13 A. It was at the Chouest office.

14 Q. It was at the Chouest office. So is that the training
15 center --

16 A. Yeah, training center --

17 Q. And is that Cut Off, Louisiana?

18 A. (Indiscernible).

19 [REDACTED] Okay --

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When was it?

21 MR. VINCENT: Oh, four years ago, five years ago --

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q. Was it required at the time that you went to that simulator?

24 A. (Indiscernible).

25 Q. Oh, so it's been -- you were operating in Alaska, you had to

1 go though that. Okay. Have you had any mates go through this
2 training program --

3 A. I got two of them going through it now.

4 Q. Okay. What is the process for it when you're working through
5 the book? Do they have to complete certain elements before they
6 can move on to the next section?

7 A. Yeah. And so, the way I kind of did it is I start with the
8 (indiscernible) because you have people come on the boat -- you
9 have to take it off the dock, okay, let's see what you can do.
10 They sit up in that chair, and they can't do nothing. And they
11 can't take it off the dock. They beat and bang around. Ask them
12 to drive a straight line, and they're all over the channel. No,
13 until you can show me that you can come off the dock on assist, if
14 you can come on the dock on assist, I'm not doing anything. You
15 know, once you show me, you can start doing these small things,
16 drive a straight line, hold a steady course, drive out of this
17 channel in day, at night, then we'll discuss coming alongside
18 ships (indiscernible).

19 Q. Okay. So just looking through this training program, it
20 starts out with section one at observation time, do you work
21 through that initially with them before they even --

22 A. Like right now, I've got a mate downstairs. He's been with
23 me, this his second hitch (indiscernible).

24 Q. Okay. He's not ready.

25 A. He's not ready.

1 Q. So this isn't something that --

2 A. But, I mean, like, he can do, like, (indiscernible) a ship.
3 He can do that kind of stuff because he can drive off the dock.
4 He can dock the ship. Or he can dock the boat and haul it off
5 here at the Aransas terminal. He can take me out of the channel.
6 And I'm confident in him. I'm confident in him that he can come
7 alongside a ship with (indiscernible). But he's got to have the
8 generalist idea of how this, at Cheniere, operates, the way we
9 catch ships, the times, you know, how long a transit is, things of
10 that nature.

11 So he's very good so far just working with me, coming in and
12 off the dock, going out of the channel, coming into the channel,
13 come alongside a ship, staying with the ship, following the
14 pilot's orders. Those are the things I (indiscernible) before we
15 started and getting him to working on conducting all of this stuff
16 because if you can't do that basic stuff, then I'm not going to
17 sit here and waste my time because it makes me nervous. I've had
18 this conversation with several different mates, don't come on my
19 boat expecting me to give you the wheel, and you didn't start
20 doing jobs when you (indiscernible), and I'm not going to risk it.

21 Q. So what's the guidance that the company provides you on this
22 specific tractor tug training program?

23 A. I mean, that's what we go for (indiscernible) items to make
24 sure that that stuff can be done and done correctly. And when I
25 mean done correctly, that means me not sitting right here over

1 your shoulder, you need to do this, you need to do that, why are
2 you not doing this, why are you not doing that?

3 Q. And when you're working through this, my understanding
4 reading it, it has specific instructions on when things need to be
5 completed. They can't be concurrent. How do you handle them? Do
6 you allow mates to do them at the same time, like, different
7 sections and elements, or do you make them work through one
8 element at a time or one evolution at a time?

9 A. One evolution -- like, okay, for me, it's difficult to go,
10 okay, we're going to do a two today, three (indiscernible), four
11 tomorrow, one the next day. We're going to start out easy because
12 I don't want to set anybody up for failure. I want to make sure
13 they can do this stuff. We'll start out easy with the two spot,
14 come alongside, stay in front, follow the pilot's orders. Coming
15 alongside, the twos, is the easiest spot. (Indiscernible) twos
16 and threes are pretty much the same. So if you got two you can do
17 a three, just different dynamics of the ship coming alongside.
18 Now, the fours and the ones, that's going to be a while because
19 for me, I have to have the nerve to allow you to do that.

20 Q. How long does it take you to feel comfortable typically with
21 someone attempting a one?

22 A. For me, I have not let anybody (indiscernible). I've done
23 one guy, he was a mate. He come over just to ride with us. And
24 he wanted to see how the ones work. But he's a captain. He knows
25 how to drive the boats. But he got twisted. And that was

1 (indiscernible). This is a whole new ball game and don't mess
2 around. You can't mess around (indiscernible) without having an
3 issue on the rear-end. We're not messing around the front. But
4 it's still, for me, it rattles me now. And I've been doing them
5 for a couple years, and still rattles me. But as far as --

6 Q. Do you feel that position is absolutely necessary for the
7 operation?

8 A. At times, it is, it really is. Do I think it should be in
9 different locations, absolutely. But it is a necessity to have.

10 Q. What do you mean by different locations?

11 A. For setting up, for putting lines up, I think (indiscernible)
12 utilize in different locations. But I understand the reason why
13 it's being done the way it's done because of high winds or heavy
14 currents. For me, I'd like to have it right here if we didn't put
15 the line up until we got right here --

16 Q. Oh, before, like, after you even get into the La Quinta.

17 A. Yeah, once you get up here. But I understand why it's down
18 there. And it's practice. Before I ever caught (indiscernible),
19 I was over here probably four or five months before I even
20 attempted. And I even come to work, you know, early, come back to
21 work so I could get work with another captain before I ever done
22 one. But the way I was taught to do it is I would leave the dock
23 here, and I would drive out of this channel backwards. And
24 everywhere I went, I would drive backwards, everywhere --

25 Q. Just to get used to it.

1 A. -- just to get used to it. And then, the first one I caught,
2 I called another captain. He actually caught it. And the one
3 after that, I caught. And it was not pretty. But I did it
4 because we had something like this bearing down. You got to be
5 able to calm your nerves, relax, and think of it as this is just a
6 ship move and not freak out because it happens.

7 Q. I mean, from our understanding, I mean, doing interviews and
8 looking into this all week, it sounds like it does not take
9 much --

10 A. Oh, yeah --

11 Q. -- to get out of place and have a bad incident happen so --

12 A. (Indiscernible). It's just not paying attention. If you
13 don't pay attention and know what's going on, before you know it,
14 you're in a jam. And if you get in a jam and you panic, you're
15 done. There's no ifs, ands, or buts about it because
16 (indiscernible). You ain't stopping that ship on a dime. And if
17 you panic, that's it, you can't move it.

18 Q. So if you're in training and doing a number one, I mean, how
19 realistic is it for the captain to even interject at that point?

20 A. It's tough because my rule is if you're driving, we have
21 (indiscernible). Sometimes if it's -- you try to catch it
22 beforehand because I'm standing right here. If you try to catch
23 it beforehand, if it gets too far gone, then, you know, hope and
24 pray that you can recover.

25 Q. Do you feel that the training program that I just showed you

1 is adequate for preparing?

2 A. It is. It's all about driving and learning. It's time.
3 That's the key (indiscernible) once or twice or three times, you
4 know, you got to be able to do it. And it's got to become second
5 nature because this isn't as easy as all these other captains make
6 this job look, it's very dangerous. And it happens very quick.
7 And something goes awry, it's going to happen quick. It's
8 repetition. It's time. And it's practice. Like I was explaining
9 to my mate last night, he'd done a really good job. But you got
10 to practice. And you got to understand the dos and don'ts of what
11 to do and what not to do, you know, like, he was coming alongside,
12 he (indiscernible) no way to come up, why are we waiting so long?
13 Now, this is his question to me last night: why are we waiting so
14 long for the ship to turn for it to come in?

15 I explained to him, you know, as it comes around that corner
16 and you're rounding it with it, you know you got that suction.
17 And that suction, whether you believe it or not, will catch you if
18 you don't drive into it right. It'll catch your stern. It'll
19 suck your stern slap up underneath the (indiscernible). You learn
20 over time, not just in one or two dockings. But when you see that
21 kind of stuff -- the more you do it, you have a better
22 understanding of, hey, I know I cut this thing too close, there's
23 a good chance I'll get sucked underneath (indiscernible).

24 Q. Does the company give you any guidance? Or is it really,
25 they trust their captains based on your experience to guide these

1 mates?

2 A. I think a lot (indiscernible) they do, they depend on us to
3 do the training and do the job because I think we've earned that.
4 You know, I've worked really hard to get where I'm at. And I've
5 done everything that I could. And I've tried to do it the right
6 way. I've had a lot from a lot of different captains. And I
7 think I've earned that trust. And if the company doesn't trust me
8 to come out here and do my job and -- I mean, look, I'm the
9 captain of this boat and to me, I take that very personal. And to
10 damage it -- this is not my equipment and to tear it up, it would
11 devastate me. And I try to instill that in my mates. And I'm
12 hard on them.

13 You know, I stay in the rear-end, you know, the whole time,
14 from the time we leave to the time we get back. But they have
15 that understanding that this job is not lackadaisical, it's
16 something you have to take seriously because if you don't, before
17 you know it (indiscernible), you've hurt somebody, killed
18 somebody --

19 [REDACTED] Jon, did you have any questions?

20 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

21 Q. -- let's see. Sir, you went through the simulator course
22 over at Cut Off, but how long were you there doing simulators?

23 A. I think it was -- I'm not for sure because it's been so long
24 ago. I think it was a week, but I could be wrong. But I think it
25 was week, five days.

1 Q. Okay. And were you doing that before you even handled a --

2 A. Yeah, that was before I went up to Alaska (indiscernible).

3 It was kind of one of those things to make sure we could, you
4 know, catch the lines and put lines up and steer the boat and
5 things of that nature.

6 Q. So you're (indiscernible) Alaska just those simulators.

7 A. They did it at that point, but I'm not sure how
8 (indiscernible), I don't know if they still do, how that works.

9 Q. So you said you spent about a year and a half in Alaska, but
10 this was a while ago. Was that ten years ago or --

11 A. What's that?

12 Q. The first time you went up to Alaska.

13 A. No, that was four, five years ago because I've been here for
14 eight. I spent about a year and a half in Tampa, New Hampshire,
15 and then, yeah, I come from Alaska. It was probably five years
16 ago.

17 Q. Okay. (Indiscernible) a week in the simulator class, were
18 there other people with you?

19 A. Oh, yeah.

20 Q. (Indiscernible) went up to Alaska.

21 A. (Indiscernible), yes, sir.

22 Q. Okay. Did you guys have, like, a classroom part?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. So you guys were studying (indiscernible).

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Okay. Do you remember how long the classroom section was?

2 A. Oh, lord -- because that was kind of -- like, when you say
3 classroom, you mean like they're teaching you how to drive the
4 boat -

5 Q. Or just talking about the boat --

6 A. I mean, you kind of got a generalized --

7 [REDACTED] Construction or --

8 MR. VINCENT: Maybe --

9 [REDACTED] PowerPoint, (indiscernible), PowerPoint.

10 MR. FURUKAWA: Was that --

11 MR. VINCENT: Not necessarily because it was like two weeks
12 of training, two or three weeks of training. We was doing all
13 kinds of stuff for Alaska. The captains had to do -- I'm trying
14 to remember. I think there might've been -- so you do, I want to
15 say, maybe you did bookwork there in the morning and after lunch,
16 you did the simulator. But like I said, it's been so long I don't
17 -- I think that's how it went though. I thin, in the mornings,
18 you did some of the guidebooks and things of that nature. And
19 then after lunch, I think we did the simulator course. And then,
20 I think one day was all day simulator --

21 MR. FURUKAWA: So do you think the simulator might help you
22 out?

23 MR. VINCENT: We had this discussion the other night about
24 simulators. Yes, simulators are good. But simulators does not
25 give you that nervousness and that sinking feeling in your stomach

1 that you get when you're actually doing the job because, like I
2 said, even to this day, you know, as many
3 times -- (indiscernible), I get nerves, you know, whether it's the
4 four spot, I'm really nervous. (Indiscernible), I get this way,
5 the one spot, you know, when you see this thing bearing down on
6 you, it's still nerve-racking. And you just don't get used to it
7 right off.

8 [REDACTED] Do you feel comfortable telling the pilots if
9 you're, like, hey, I can't do this right this second, like, --

10 (Crosstalk)

11 [REDACTED] -- having done it before --

12 MR. VINCENT: Oh, yeah --

13 (Crosstalk)

14 MR. VINCENT: But you can't keep yourself safe.

15 [REDACTED] Okay.

16 MR. FURUKAWA: This is your position on a boat.

17 (Indiscernible) too close to the anchor or --

18 MR. VINCENT: As far as the one spot, my big concern is the
19 bulbous because when I come in on the ones, I come in right under,
20 directly in front, always in front. (Indiscernible) ride the
21 bulbous. So I try to stay right on top of the bulbous, and I just
22 (indiscernible) right on top because that way, if something
23 happens and I start by some (indiscernible) doing this, I don't
24 want to be over here doing this. I want to be over here doing it.
25 I'm going to be right here doing it. That way if I wipe out, I

1 wipe out away from the ship. I won't have no chance
2 (indiscernible). Me and the four spot have a love-hate
3 relationship.

4 (Indiscernible) if we get up there and get ready to turn
5 around, I don' like what I'm seeing, it's always you keep yourself
6 safe back there (indiscernible).

7 MR. FURUKAWA: So you back off and --

8 MR. VINCENT: I'll stretch out and do whatever I got to do.

9 [REDACTED] So when you go into the one position, and
10 you're putting your line up, are you already center, or are you
11 kind of (indiscernible) side of the vessel? Just depends?

12 MR. VINCENT: Yeah.

13 [REDACTED] From the wind? Yeah.

14 MR. VINCENT: Sometimes I just drive back. I'll run a little
15 (indiscernible) drive it backwards or hold steady in the middle of
16 the channel. I don't like treading water a whole lot. So I
17 (indiscernible) one way or another. But when he comes in, when he
18 gets to 25, 26 at 25 miles, I (indiscernible), get my deck crew
19 out, and start gradually making my way in reverse and start
20 (indiscernible) speed, get myself good, loose, and warm, calm my
21 nerves, and just let him jump up on (indiscernible). And I just
22 stay right in front of him and just stay right there
23 (indiscernible), relax because I have to because it's nerve-
24 racking. It really is.

25 [REDACTED] I'd say so.

1 MR. VINCENT: And I just relax. (Indiscernible) regain
2 composure and stay out there. I focus to see how straight
3 (indiscernible). And that's what keeps me. How straight can I
4 stay (indiscernible)? And once I get the line, it's game over
5 (indiscernible).

6 [REDACTED] So with the tow lines, do they float at all,
7 or if they get in the water, are you done?

8 MR. VINCENT: Oh, they'll float.

9 [REDACTED] They'll float.

10 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, (indiscernible).

11 [REDACTED] What's that?

12 MR. VINCENT: If you (indiscernible) lays up on the front of
13 the bow. And it's just enough that they can get it and start
14 taking it up. And once they start taking it up, then I start
15 (indiscernible). So I have somebody stand here with me. It's
16 usually my engineer and my mate. As it goes up, they pay out. If
17 it goes up, they pay out.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) on deck.

19 MR. VINCENT: No, because what happened -- and here is how I
20 come up with this. I used to, when (indiscernible) deck and once
21 it goes up, well, here's what happened. It went up, and it all
22 went out. It shot out because as I was backing up, I was paying
23 attention, but I actually come up too much too fast and it all
24 just dumped off the end of the boat and laid up on top of the
25 bulbous. And it freaked me out because I thought it went under

1 the bulbous. It scared me. I'm like, never again so --

2 BY [REDACTED]

3 Q. What are your deckhands doing normally while it's hanging
4 out?

5 A. They're standing right here.

6 Q. Do you normally have chock on it at all?

7 A. Absolutely not, (indiscernible).

8 Q. So it's really up to the captain how they pay out their tow
9 line.

10 A. Yeah. I've had strong feelings about that tow -- because
11 that line runs off the deck -- you grab a line, you either grab it
12 like this, or you twist it and put it in your hands. That line
13 rips off (indiscernible), and it grabs a hold of that thing, and
14 it's going up, and you're backing out and all, that line is super
15 heavy. If it's wet, you're not stopping. You're --

16 (Crosstalk)

17 A. -- somebody off the boat and break their hand. There's so
18 many things that couldn't go wrong.

19 Q. When you get enough weight of that line in the water, would
20 it snap the messenger line or the heaving line?

21 A. Oh, yeah, I'm sure it would depend on what kind of line.
22 Like I got -- I got like (indiscernible).

23 Q. Do all the tow vessels have the same or no?

24 A. (Indiscernible).

25 Q. When you say bumblebee line, is that the spectra, the blue?

1 A. That black and yellow one.

2 Q. Oh, as a heaving line or -- I meant for the --

3 (Crosstalk)

4 A. -- heaving line.

5 Q. Oh, okay. So what about for the tow line though, is it the
6 same tow line on all of them? The actual tow hawser.

7 (Crosstalk)

8 Q. The three-quarter inch --

9 A. -- yeah, the three, yeah, the three and -- yeah, those are
10 the same --

11 Q. Those are the same on all the boats.

12 A. Yep.

13 [REDACTED] Okay.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

15 MR. VINCENT: The blue one.

16 [REDACTED] Yeah.

17 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, absolutely because I had to take the one
18 off the *Portland* and put it on the dock. They cut it off.

19 [REDACTED] It'll float.

20 MR. VINCENT: That blue, when they cut it off, it was laying
21 beside my boat. Me and the deckhands had to go out there and fish
22 it out of the water.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So it came up --

24 MR. VINCENT: It come up (indiscernible).

25 [REDACTED] Is there anything that would cause that to

1 sink?

2 MR. VINCENT: Again, when they cut the line off the drive,
3 (indiscernible) and the line was -- the diver had to cut it off,
4 and it floated beside my boat. So we had to fish it out of the
5 water. And the guys (indiscernible).

6 [REDACTED] What about your messenger lines, do they
7 float?

8 MR. VINCENT: No (indiscernible).

9 MR. FURUKAWA: So does it hit the water (indiscernible).

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They got a hundred foot -- the spectra
11 (indiscernible) float on the water.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Blue --

13 MR. VINCENT: I think so because when I have to take my line
14 in, when I take my line on the one, (indiscernible). They don't
15 go straight to the bottom.

16 [REDACTED] Will the messenger line pull it down?

17 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible) it will automatically pull it
18 because I've had, you know, in the past -- I'm going up to
19 four -- you know, we had an instance one time where they're coming
20 in, the line on the four spot, and when the line went up, they put
21 it in the wrong hole. And guess what, you got to start all over
22 again. So basically, they have to (indiscernible) you back in
23 line or when they fed back the line, they dropped it back to them,
24 and it shot down the side of my boat, and it scared me to death.
25 So I had to, you know, make a quick maneuver to keep that from

1 sucking up underneath my wheel, regroup, (indiscernible).

2 [REDACTED] So if it did end up slack next to your vessel,
3 and you turned the wrong way, it could get caught.

4 MR. VINCENT: Oh, yeah, doing that turn --

5 [REDACTED] It just sucks it in --

6 MR. VINCENT: -- probably just suck it right in.

7 [REDACTED] Okay. All right. Jon, did you have some more
8 questions?

9 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

10 Q. So when you went up to Alaska, was that the first time you
11 went out with Chouest as captain?

12 A. No, I was a captain in Sabine.

13 Q. Sabine.

14 A. Um-hmm.

15 Q. Sabine Point.

16 A. Sabine Pass.

17 Q. Oh, Sabine Pass --

18 A. Yeah, Cheniere has a company over there too, the Sabine tugs.

19 Q. Were those also (indiscernible) Z-drives?

20 A. Yeah (indiscernible).

21 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. But you didn't have --

22 MR. VINCENT: It's a different tug (indiscernible).

23 [REDACTED] These aren't considered tractor tugs?

24 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible).

25 [REDACTED] Okay. So that's the different placement of

1 the Z-drive.

2 MR. VINCENT: Yeah. The tugs are on the bow, but you drive
3 from the stern. With these, they're on the stern and
4 (indiscernible).

5 [REDACTED] Okay. So this is considered a stern drive --

6 MR. FURUKAWA: Is one of them harder than the other?

7 MR. VINCENT: Sir.

8 MR. FURUKAWA: Is one of them harder than the other?

9 MR. VINCENT: If you know how to drive --

10 MR. FURUKAWA: -- captain, you still have to go through the
11 simulator thing before you went up to Alaska.

12 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible).

13 [REDACTED] So they require the simulator for Alaska, but
14 they don't require the simulator for Sabine Pass or Corpus.

15 MR. VINCENT: No. When they first started over here, I
16 thought they had to go through a training, but I'm not for sure on
17 that.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) meeting the
19 Valdez -- up there --

20 (Crosstalk)

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So when you're in, like, Cordova and
22 all (indiscernible).

23 [REDACTED] Yeah.

24 MR. VINCENT: Sabine, I don't know. I don't think so because
25 when I started over there, you know, I was just (indiscernible)

1 and working my way up. So all the training I got over there was
2 real time (indiscernible). And still, you know, I was over there
3 for my first run, five years. You know when I was -- still when I
4 left, I was not good at all. (Indiscernible) I was like, yeah, I
5 got this. I can do this. I couldn't even take it off the dock.
6 So no, I did not (indiscernible).

7 [REDACTED] Okay.

8 MR. VINCENT: And it took me a while, several months
9 of -- and my own time learning and training and driving, knowing
10 that was what I needed to do.

11 [REDACTED] So if you had a mate come in February, would
12 they be ready now to be in that number one position?

13 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible) just depends. I mean, it
14 depends on the individual. You know, has he got past experience?
15 You know, can he drive the boat because say if you come on my boat
16 and you're like, yep, I've been docking ships for ten, fifteen
17 years, I know how to drive a boat, take it off here and sure
18 enough, you can actually do the job, that I feel confident in
19 letting you do it, we try it with me, and we try the first time
20 and then, if you've done a good job, yeah, absolutely but --

21 [REDACTED] Then you would work through the --

22 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, then we work through everything --

23 [REDACTED] Yeah.

24 MR. VINCENT: But you get another guy, say he come on
25 board -- yeah, I've got two or three years experience, I can do

1 this. And you can't even take it off the dock, yeah, we have a
2 long way to go brother.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You think having past Z-drive
4 experience not in the same style is beneficial?

5 MR. VINCENT: It kind of gives you a base. Like the kid I've
6 got here now, he's got a good base. And he's going to be good.
7 It's just going to take time in learning it because he docked
8 ships in the Mississippi River. You know, when you dock them on
9 the river, things are a little different than you dock them here.
10 But as far as boat handling, he's got a good base. And I don't
11 think it'll take him (indiscernible).

12 [REDACTED] When did he start?

13 MR. VINCENT: I think he started in May.

14 [REDACTED] May. Okay. So he's still relatively new --

15 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, he's still relatively new. I mean, this
16 is all --

17 [REDACTED] Second hitch or --

18 MR. VINCENT: Second hitch and I don't even think he's done a
19 (indiscernible) just yet so --

20 MR. FURUKAWA: -- the first time for him on Z-drives, on the
21 rivers he was doing --

22 MR. VINCENT: Z-drives --

23 [REDACTED] He as doing Z --

24 MR. FURUKAWA: With (indiscernible) with the rafts of barges
25 or --

1 MR. VINCENT: No, I think he did a ship. I think it's a
2 ship --

3 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay.

4 MR. VINCENT: He was a ship docker.

5 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay -- Alaska to Valdez, is that four Chouest
6 tug do the same thing, the number four, number one, and --

7 MR. VINCENT: I don't even think they do a one up there
8 (indiscernible). They use different tugs. They have the bigger
9 tugs.

10 (Crosstalk)

11 MR. VINCENT: Yeah --

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- those are also ones --

13 MR. VINCENT: Yeah. I think they do only the four spot.

14 [REDACTED] And they have --

15 (Crosstalk)

16 MR. VINCENT: The tugs are designed like these do, be two and
17 three (indiscernible).

18 MR. FURUKAWA: So after doing ship handling, the
19 (indiscernible) is up there --

20 (Crosstalk)

21 MR. FURUKAWA: -- escorting.

22 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, maybe that's the word. The ship is --

23 (Crosstalk)

24 MR. FURUKAWA: -- experience for you to go up there.

25 MR. VINCENT: Oh, yeah, well, it's very good. I learned a

1 lot of dos and a lot of don'ts. And that's the only way you
2 learn --

3 [REDACTED] It really is.

4 MR. VINCENT: If you make a mistake, you don't want to make
5 it too big because lord knows, I've got mine, plenty of them. I
6 mean -- and they know that (indiscernible) limited and minimize as
7 much as possible.

8 [REDACTED] We're all human.

9 MR. FURUKAWA: Over here, your work schedule is 28 days on,
10 28 days off?

11 MR. VINCENT: I was 21 and 21.

12 MR. FURUKAWA: Twenty-one, twenty-one. And when you were up
13 in Alaska, (indiscernible).

14 MR. VINCENT: Mine was six and four. I worked 42
15 (indiscernible) 42 and 28. I worked six weeks on --

16 [REDACTED] Are all the captains on these vessels on the
17 same schedule?

18 (Crosstalk)

19 [REDACTED] No.

20 MR. VINCENT: I think everybody works -- I think each captain
21 works a different -- I think (indiscernible) work 21 and 21. I
22 think these guys, they're (indiscernible) 28 and 14.

23 MR. FURUKAWA: Your watches will get six on, six off.

24 MR. VINCENT: Yes, sir. We work eleven, twelve.

25 MR. FURUKAWA: Is each one the same (indiscernible)?

1 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible).

2 MR. FURUKAWA: And you said the towing lines, they do float,
3 but if you put enough out, it'll --

4 MR. VINCENT: -- if you put enough out --

5 MR. FURUKAWA: And it gets sucked in --

6 MR. VINCENT: You'll get yourself sucked up, (indiscernible).

7 [REDACTED] So if it's hanging out and you get too close
8 to that bulbous, you're going to get in a predicament, right --

9 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, yeah. And I've seen that firsthand, you
10 know. (Indiscernible) I would pay it out, make sure everything
11 was set up that way, everything will go nice and smooth. Yeah, it
12 was not smooth that day and it all run off the end of the boat,
13 and I thought it was wrapped up under that bulbous. And that
14 scared me to death but -- that's why I come up --

15 [REDACTED] You're new method.

16 MR. VINCENT: My new method.

17 [REDACTED] Do you all ever do tabletops with the captains
18 just to kind of hotwash your experiences on best practice or --

19 MR. VINCENT: No, we all just discuss it. I mean, we'll talk
20 every now and again. But as far as the way everybody does things,
21 that captain probably does something different. And I'm going to
22 do something different. That guy over there is going to do
23 something different. They're going to do what they're comfortable
24 with and what works for them. You know, I've had bad reviews on
25 why I do the way I do it. What if your line gets stuck, you know,

1 you get that --

2 [REDACTED] Oh, yeah.

3 MR. VINCENT: -- the butt hole putting in line. What are you
4 going to do? Well, that's why I only use that line for that job
5 and before job because it's not going to happen if you do suck it
6 up, you get that butt hole in, you can pull it out.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Then it gets wrapped up inside the
8 (indiscernible). It gets underneath the other coil --

9 [REDACTED] Oh, I see what you're saying. Okay. I was
10 like, what do you mean by butt hole?

11 MR. VINCENT: So if you're pulling onto that ship and you
12 sink your line (indiscernible) and knot up. And the hold on the
13 tug will jar when it gets to that tug point, and you need to pull
14 it out or it (indiscernible). And it'll snatch you if you ain't
15 careful. So to make sure that that doesn't happen, we use that
16 big line for the one and the four. And you're always stretched
17 out. And when you're done pulling and pulling and pushing if you
18 have to, always pay it out more to make sure I don't have anything
19 in my line that's going to cause me to have any interruptions
20 (indiscernible).

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then, you reeled it back in
22 (indiscernible). So he knows how to pull it in, and then it
23 crawls under another (indiscernible).

24 [REDACTED] Okay.

25 MR. FURUKAWA: You got somebody over there to make sure

1 it's --

2 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, if I can watch him (indiscernible). And
3 that's why that's happened (indiscernible) goes up, they start
4 dragging through their bullnose on the ship. And I'll just pay it
5 out so that way (indiscernible).

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you're on number one, you're --

7 MR. VINCENT: No, that's my one and four line.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One and four.

9 MR. VINCENT: Yes, sir.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And this is the one on the port
11 side --

12 MR. VINCENT: Two and three.

13 MR. FURUKAWA: Two and three.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, the port --

15 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, they're a different size.

16 MR. FURUKAWA: (Indiscernible).

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

18 [REDACTED] Is that three three-quarter inch?

19 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, I believe so.

20 [REDACTED] Okay.

21 MR. FURUKAWA: And where's your controls for --

22 MR. VINCENT: -- so I use it when I do either one of my --
23 I'll usually have -- I mean, I can do it. But I don't like taking
24 my hands off, but that's just me. I like to keep my hands on the
25 wheel at all times. I grab my boat. So I have somebody sit here

1 and --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 MR. VINCENT: -- engineer and my mate, somebody.

4 MR. GORDON: That way he can watch his aspect of his line as
5 far as the bow (indiscernible). And he doesn't have to sit there
6 and watch the winch --

7 [REDACTED] You're not distracted by --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, he's got his hands on the
9 (indiscernible).

10 MR. VINCENT: And my deckhands know, when the line goes up,
11 they make their way back to right here. That way I can always see
12 both my guys --

13 [REDACTED] They're not --

14 (Crosstalk)

15 MR. VINCENT: -- no bad situation.

16 [REDACTED] Yeah. Okay. All right.

17 MR. FURUKAWA: (Indiscernible) the deckhand --

18 [REDACTED] Yeah, he got his helmet knocked. It could've
19 been really bad. But he used a chock. And he was on this port
20 side when it was going -- he saw it going bad, so he let go, which
21 paid it out. And then, he was coming this way. But it was
22 already taught wrapped in the Z-drive. At that time, they didn't
23 know. And he said something told me to duck. He like, that was
24 God telling me to duck so -- I mean, he'd knocked off his hard hat
25 clear off so --

1 MR. VINCENT: What's that line --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 [REDACTED] You already get assist, right. Were you the
4 one that took over the one, or were you the one that went to help?

5 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, I avoided it and took it over.

6 [REDACTED] You took over the one. Okay.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So you were probably -- the two and be
8 able to see the ones --

9 MR. VINCENT: I was ahead of them. So my mate was driving.
10 He was bringing us in. I went down to use the restroom. And I
11 started working on lunch. He sent one of the (indiscernible) come
12 down and get me, they're like captain, you need to come up top
13 (indiscernible) the channel. And that was a wrap.

14 [REDACTED] Okay. And did you have any issues with making
15 up the one that day. No -- environmental concerns with current or
16 wind or --

17 MR. VINCENT: No. But I had to calm my nerves
18 (indiscernible). That got in my head a little bit. Yeah, I
19 mean --

20 (Crosstalk)

21 MR. VINCENT: But here's my thing on the whole one spot,
22 faster's easier, slow is harder. The slower you go, the harder it
23 is to stay in front. I like to catch them when that happy spot,
24 as we're breaking it down, I like to try to catch in between a
25 seven, six. But once they drop below six to five, four, it really

1 takes a lot of angle. Instead of going all over the place --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, and I can really keep control of
4 (indiscernible) because I always like to get it up before we get
5 to that turn. But once we're at that turn, if it ain't up, we got
6 to stop until we get (indiscernible).

7 [REDACTED] It's not the first time we've been told that,
8 faster is easier, yeah.

9 MR. VINCENT: And it really is because -- now, when I say
10 (indiscernible) absolutely not. But I will slide in around seven,
11 eight, eight and a half, get comfortable. That way I hold her
12 straight -- but we don't take a lot of angle (indiscernible), I
13 mean, a lot of angle to steer it at that point. Once you get the
14 bow down, you'll start getting to that four or five --

15 MR. FURUKAWA: -- four to five knots.

16 MR. VINCENT: Yeah. I mean --

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And how much of a percentage are using
18 (indiscernible)?

19 MR. VINCENT: Oh, it just depends. You got to ebb. When
20 we're coming in, I can use a 75, 80. And then, on top of that, if
21 it's a strong ebb like the other night, oh, lord, I was fighting
22 it the whole time.

23 [REDACTED] What's considered a strong ebb for you?

24 MR. VINCENT: I don't know. I just know because -- I guess,
25 what, half a knot maybe.

1 [REDACTED] That's strong.

2 MR. VINCENT: For me, if you're doing a one.

3 [REDACTED] So the one on the day that you took over they
4 estimated was .7 knots.

5 MR. VINCENT: Oh, was it?

6 [REDACTED] Yeah.

7 MR. VINCENT: It wasn't that bad. For me it --

8 [REDACTED] It wasn't that bad. Okay.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He was already worked up.

10 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible).

11 [REDACTED] Your adrenaline was running, and you didn't
12 even notice.

13 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible) when I come up -- and this is
14 something that, I mean, you just don't want to see something
15 like -- I come up, and you're coming up, right. They're like,
16 hey, captain, the *Portland's* in trouble. I come up the stairs,
17 and I stand out there. And all I see is this boat shift off the
18 channel and stop. And I'm like, oh, lord have mercy, I hope
19 everybody's okay. You know, that's what I thought
20 (indiscernible). All the commotion was going on. So I just
21 shouted, hey, if you need me, I'm up here, I'll be the one if you
22 need me. The pilot asked, hey, can you be the one. So I had to
23 run up top around, get my lines ready because I'm set up for the
24 number two.

25 So now, I've got to take this line up, get this line out, and

1 get my deck guys ready to catch this spot. And we're
2 already -- when I finally got up, we were almost at
3 (indiscernible).

4 [REDACTED] Okay. Almost at the turn.

5 MR. VINCENT: Getting close to being at the turn around
6 (indiscernible), which is a bad spot so --

7 [REDACTED] Why is that a bad spot to catch?

8 MR. VINCENT: Because you're having to watch the ship as he
9 turns. And you're having to make the turn --

10 [REDACTED] Oh, I got you. You want to be made up ready
11 to go before that turn's even, like --

12 MR. VINCENT: Before it's even -- yeah.

13 [REDACTED] -- thought --

14 (Crosstalk)

15 MR. VINCENT: Yeah, because if you're outside the
16 channel -- I mean, you -- this is my theory, if you're set too far
17 over in that channel and you run aground, guess what, you got to
18 line up, you got a whole big bag of issues at that point.

19 [REDACTED] Yeah. All right.

20 MR. FURUKAWA: So were you able to get your line up before
21 that --

22 MR. VINCENT: Oh, yeah.

23 MR. FURUKAWA: --turn came.

24 (Crosstalk)

25 MR. VINCENT: -- relax, take a breath --

1 MR. FURUKAWA: The LNG vessel was still doing eight knots, or
2 did it slow down?

3 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible), it doesn't slow down.

4 [REDACTED] All right. I don't think I have anymore
5 questions. [REDACTED], did you have a question?

6 [REDACTED] I do have one more just about the training
7 records because you said those were not your initials. I was just
8 curious about the dates on the vessel whether they lined up, if
9 you would've been on that vessel with him or not, you know what I
10 mean?

11 MR. VINCENT: Yeah. When I worked, I think it was a week
12 that I worked (indiscernible), he was my mate.

13 [REDACTED] And then, the dates with your initials --

14 [REDACTED] End of April beginning of May.

15 MR. VINCENT: (Indiscernible).

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But underneath (indiscernible) knots,
17 I think I would verify the date --

18 [REDACTED] That's what I'm curious --

19 [REDACTED] Yeah, we don't have to do that necessarily on
20 the recording. We can verify it after we're done with this. Do
21 you have, like, a log of when you were onboard -- or we can go
22 over and check it. I can check it, so I can verify that.

23 MR. VINCENT: You know, because I worked over there, I had to
24 throw him out of the chair twice.

25 [REDACTED] Why is that?

1 MR. VINCENT: One, because we almost took out the *Portland*
2 (indiscernible).

3 [REDACTED] Okay.

4 MR. VINCENT: And the other one, we were bringing one in, and
5 we follow the pilot's commands, right. (Indiscernible).

6 [REDACTED] Was he ready to be working in that training?

7 MR. VINCENT: Absolutely (indiscernible).

8 [REDACTED] All right.

9 MR. VINCENT: He should've never been (indiscernible).

10 [REDACTED] Do you have any suggestions for the training
11 program to prevent issues like this happening again in the future?

12 MR. VINCENT: So I have mixed feelings about that because
13 there again, if you have somebody with experience that has done
14 the job before, and they're comfortable doing it, the
15 (indiscernible). If you display that he can drive this boat in
16 reverse pilot out of the channel all the way, and he can hold it
17 straight and not all over the place, and you display that you can
18 run in front of the ship without getting in trouble, then yeah,
19 (indiscernible). But if you get somebody that's just, you know,
20 is not experienced, it's just going to take time, you know,
21 because that is a particular spot -- if you haven't been running
22 in front of the ship (indiscernible) line up. Like, you know, the
23 *Aransas*, when I was learning, he was right in front of me
24 (indiscernible).

25 [REDACTED] Oh, so you would, like, practice as if he was

1 the ship and you were the --

2 MR. VINCENT: Yeah. He was rattled. And then, we're
3 rattled. The next thing you know, I'm sideways in the channel
4 (indiscernible). So I'm going to start all over again and just
5 things like that.

6 [REDACTED] So would it be beneficial to have, like, a
7 training program that -- they're not even touching the helm with
8 the ship alongside before they're -- like, they need to get signed
9 off without ship assist before they're even --

10 MR. VINCENT: Yeah. I mean, you got to show that you can
11 actually handle a boat. I mean, you got to display you can drive
12 a straight line, that you can come on and off the dock. And you
13 got to think on your feet because there is times when you get
14 yourself in a situation. You have got to think on your feet. And
15 you do not have time to think about it.

16 [REDACTED] Yeah, it just needs to be second nature.

17 MR. VINCENT: It needs to be second nature because -- I give
18 a good example. That dock (indiscernible), Sherwin (ph.) dock,
19 the ship cuts in, and he cuts it too close, and you're on the 90
20 out here, well, you're not coming around that thing on a 90
21 because you're going to smack that dock. You better be able to
22 think on your feet and figure out, oh, what do I need to do.
23 (Indiscernible) got time to freeze up because by then,
24 (indiscernible). You know, even in a three spot, you come in too
25 close -- well, most guys just go in there and drive it in there.

1 They say, no, you got to run them underneath the ship. You got to
2 know, hey, I got to get this thing out of here before I can cross
3 that jam. And you got to know how to do that.

4 [REDACTED] Okay. All right. This concludes the
5 recording of the interview. It is 1325 Central Time. This is
6 Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] on August 12th, 2022.

7 (Whereupon, at 1:25 p.m. Central, the interview was
8 concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

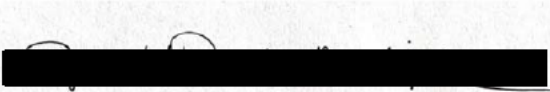
IN THE MATTER OF: GROUNDING OF TOWING VESSEL
 CC PORTLAND ON AUGUST 8, 2022
 Interview of Timothy Vincent

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM035

PLACE: Aboard the *CC La Quinta*

DATE: August 12, 2022

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Janet Deal
Transcriber